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EASTERN EUROPEAN INTELLIGENCER

OCI# 0546/74

3 Jan. 1974

Tito-Ceausescu Talks Postponed

Yugoslav Ambassador Njegovan in Bucharest recently said that Tito's visit to Bucharest, planned for this month, will be postponed until spring. The delay may well reflect a mutual desire to avoid exacerbating bilateral strains by premature attempts to resolve differences. Njegovan acknowledged complications in relations, but he attempted to put the best face possible on the squabble by asserting that relations are "excellent" and would remain so.

Relations between the two countries have chilled as a result of their differing attitudes toward combatants in the Middle East war. Romanian attempts to play a mediating role angered Belgrade whose all-out support of its nonaligned Arab friends diverged markedly from Bucharest's more balanced approach toward the Israeli and Arab positions. Subsequently, Tito's friendly talks with Brezhnev in Kiev increased Romanian suspicions of increased Soviet influence with Belgrade and contributed to Bucharest's sense of isolation.

High level efforts to smooth over the differences in November and December apparently failed to make any significant progress, but they do seem to have kept the communication channels open. Both sides may now hope that a cooling off period will aid later efforts to restore the atmosphere of cooperation and understanding that has characterized their relationship, particularly since 1968.

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Hungarian Retirements Accelerate

The pace of personnel actions under new cadre policies (approved by the party in late-November) picked up over the weekend, when two deputies in the Interior Ministry were replaced. Earlier, the Foreign Minister was retired with honors and replaced by his conservative first deputy.

The latest actions do not establish any pattern for other expected personnel replacements. Of the two incumbents removed, one was retired at the age of 52 and the other was transferred to a comparable slot in the foreign ministry. The apparently premature retirement of Deputy Interior Minister Jozsef Galambos may be due to poor health. There is little information on Galambos, but he was demoted from

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the First Deputy slot in the mid-1960's because of unspecified health difficulties.

The two new deputies have varied backgrounds. Lajos Karasz was promoted from within the interior ministry, but Gyorgy Olah comes from the party apparatus. Olah has been party first secretary in Heves district since 1965, and previously served 7 years as head of the Szolnok district government.

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#### Grechko Visit to Hungary

Some unpleasantness apparently surfaced during Soviet Defense Minister Grechko's late-December visit to Hungary, judging by the final communique. The document claims a spirit of "full accord and frankness", but provides no clues on which issues required "frank" discussion. We would speculate that Grechko's review of the troops may have left him dismayed over the often haphazard Hungarian approach to soldiering.

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[redacted] senior Hungarian military men were unhappy about the pending Grechko visit, in part because they did not want to host a large delegation during the holidays. This dismay might have stemmed from an uneasy feeling that the troops would not be in top inspection order because of the holidays.

Grechko does not often visit Hungary, perhaps because he well knows the Hungarians do not approach military matters with Prussian-like zeal. The Hungarian military is used extensively in the economy because of manpower shortages.

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#### Poland: Trumping Your King

The Gierek regime, demonstrating its continuing intolerance with local miscreants, has sentenced several members of the national bridge team to prison terms ranging from two to eight years for alleged currency violations during international tournaments. Specifically, the bridge players (whose scores remain unreported) are accused of smuggling out \$130,000 US dollars in currency and returning home with 167 pounds in gold. It is clear, from the evidence at hand, that Warsaw does not intend to impinge on the purity of its principles. The destiny of the gold has not yet been reported.

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